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SUBJECT: INSTRAW VOLUNTARY FUNDING REQUEST

¶1. (U) Summary: Mission received the following note dated August 23, 2007, from the Permanent Representative of Honduras to the United Nations addressed to Amb. Khalizad, raising the need for voluntary funding for the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). (Comment: The U.S. delegation in dealing with INSTRAW's budget at the May 2007 session of the UN Fifth Committee argued against a subvention of approximately USD 350 thousand to cover INSTRAW's core budget needs and insisted that all funding should be on a voluntary basis. End comment.) In light of the recent reorganization of INSTRAW, the improvements made by the new Executive Director, and the position taken by the U.S. in budget discussions, Department may wish to give this request consideration. Text of note follows in para 2 below. End summary.

¶2. (U) Begin text of Honduras note:

Excellency,

In my capacity as President of the Executive Board of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW), I have the honour to present you with updated information on the Institute's activities.

The current Executive Board comprises the Honorable Delegations of Belarus, Egypt, Grenada, Honduras, Israel, the Philippines, Slovakia, Spain, Syria, and Zimbabwe, and we are contributing to resource mobilization efforts for the Institute's core budget, which as you know operates on the basis of voluntary contributions.

As you are aware, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on 29 June 2007 (A/RES/61/273), which granted UN-INSTRAW funding in order to continue its operations through 2007 on an exceptional and reimbursable basis, and in which the General Assembly "reiterates its appeal to Member States as a matter of urgency, to contribute voluntary funds in support of the Institute and to honour existing pledges."

The Institute has been mandated by the United Nations to conduct research and training activities for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and has been part of the UN's gender equality entities since 1976. The Institute has been a pioneer in research and training on such issues as: gender and statistics; time-use data collection and analysis; women's role in the environment and sustainable development; and gender and new and renewable sources of energy.

UN-INSTRAW's current programme of work focuses on three strategic areas:

- Gender, peace and security - The Institute focuses on the integration of gender perspectives in security sector reform efforts and the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 in order to contribute towards the elimination of violence against women through research, training, and policy advocacy.

- Gender, migration, remittances and development - The Institute is carrying out a series of case studies that seek to analyze the gender impact of remittances on local development and promote the formulation of policies that will improve the situation of women migrants.

- Gender, Governance and Women's Political Participation - The Institute has produced a series of six research studies and various capacity-building materials on women's political participation at the local level and is implementing research and training activities in various countries throughout the world.

The Institute works in three languages and has established a website that receives over 1,800,000 visitors per month and serves 50,000 downloads per month (see <http://www.un-instraw.org>). In the future, it is envisaged that documents will be available in all the official United Nations languages.

As you are aware, UN-INSTRAW has struggled to secure voluntary contributions towards the Institute's core budget. The lack of voluntary contributions has had as a consequence that on an exceptional basis requests for supplementary funds through subventions from the United Nations regular budget have been presented, which when granted have permitted the Institute to continue its operations although in a precarious and non sustainable manner.

As a result of the Institutional revitalization process, launched in 2004, UN-INSTRAW has been very successful in responding to the specific requests of Member States and other entities of the UN System for technical cooperation in the areas under its mandate. In addition, UN-INSTRAW has secured extra-budgetary funding for projects in the Institute's main area of work. (The list of on-going projects is available in the web site of the Institute).

On behalf of the Executive Board of UN-INSTRAW, I wish to express to you our confidence in the progress the Institute can achieve based on the experience of the last three years and in the vision and mission that we have approved and upon which the 2008-2011 Strategic Framework is based.

Your country has given support to UN-INSTRAW throughout the years and it is very important that you continue to maintain your support to the Institute during this time of revitalization and change, especially as UN-INSTRAW is starting to produce positive concrete results that will contribute to making a difference in women's lives.

In this regard, I would particularly appreciate that your Excellency submit to the consideration of your Government the possibility of making a voluntary contribution to the UN-INSTRAW Trust Fund for the core budget which will permit the continuous operation of the Institute during this period of transition and change. It is our understanding that the "United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities" will be held on 12 November 2007.

On behalf of the Executive Board, I thank you in advance for your support, and use this opportunity to convey to you the assurances of my highest consideration.

End text of note.
KHALILZAD